



PRESS RELEASE
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For Immediate Release

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HUSBAND AND WIFE SENTENCED FOR CREDIT CARD FRAUD

Orlando, Florida - U.S. District Judge Gregory A. Presnell yesterday sentenced Joel H. Brown, age 44, to sixty months' imprisonment and ordered him to pay restitution of \$560,020.02 to American Express for credit card fraud. Joel H. Brown pled guilty to one count of access device fraud on January 25, 2005.

On March 28, 2005, U.S. Chief District Judge Patricia C. Fawsett, sentenced Brown's wife, Tameka Y. Brown, 32, of Kissimmee, Florida, to two years probation and ordered her to pay restitution of \$67,524.35 to American Express and a \$100 special assessment for her involvement in the credit card fraud scheme devised by her husband. Tameka Y. Brown pled guilty to one count of access device fraud on January 11, 2005.

According to the facts set forth in the plea agreements executed by the Browns, Joel H. Brown was on federal supervised release in Kansas in 1998 when he decided to flee to Florida to avoid a warrant that was expected to be issued in connection with violations of his federal supervised release. His wife and family then joined him in Florida. Once in Florida, Joel H. Brown and his wife discontinued use of their real names and started using various aliases to avoid detection.

Joel H. Brown developed a scheme by which he obtained dozens of corporate cards from American Express that were issued in fictitious names. To do this, Joel H. Brown submitted separate applications with American Express on behalf of four companies. In those applications, Joel H. Brown falsely represented that the companies were active and had been in operation for several years, among other things. To convince American Express that the four companies were credit-worthy, Joel H. Brown submitted false documents for each of them, including fake leases and bogus financial documents. Joel H. Brown then fabricated lists of fictitious employees at the four companies who were to be issued the corporate cards.

Between July 2003 and September 2004, Joel H. Brown obtained approximately fifty (50) cards from American Express in response to the false applications that he had submitted. Forty-six (46) of those cards were issued in fictitious names. Another four were issued in real names. Joel H. Brown and his wife used many of those cards for their personal benefit and to operate a business that they had started called Goliath Transportation. Few payments were ever made on the amounts that were due. In total, America Express lost approximately \$560,020.02, including delinquency fees and finance charges, on the cards that were fraudulently obtained by Joel H. Brown and Tameka Y. Brown.

This investigation began as a result of a fugitive arrest by the United States Marshal's Service. On September 1, 2004, Deputies of the United States Marshals Service arrested Joel H. Brown on a federal warrant out of Kansas arising from his violations of federal supervised release. In the course of conducting a search of Brown incident to his arrest, a Deputy United States Marshal found approximately thirty-two (32) false

identification documents and fraudulently obtained credit cards. The case was referred to the United States Secret Service, which conducted an investigation of the Browns. The case was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Roger B. Handberg.